



Video fills in details on alleged Ga. election system breach



Page 2

In this Jan. 19, 2021 image taken from Coffee County, Ga., security video, Doug Logan, bottom, and Jeff Lenberg are seen arriving at the Coffee County elections office in Douglas, Ga.

Associated Press



Large amount of patients per general practitioner becoming a problem for General Health Insurance in Aruba

Page 7

Arikok National Park urges the local community to plan more fruit trees to save parakeet population



Page 11

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Video fills in details on alleged Ga. election system breach

By KATE BRUMBACK

Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Two months after the 2020 presidential election, a team of computer experts traveled to south Georgia to copy software and data from voting equipment in an apparent breach of a county election system. They were greeted outside by the head of the local Republican Party, who was involved in efforts by then-President Donald Trump to overturn his election loss. A security camera outside the elections office in rural Coffee County captured their arrival. The footage also shows that some local election officials were at the office during what the Georgia secretary of state's office has described as "alleged unauthorized access" of election equipment.

Security footage from two weeks later raises additional alarms — showing two people who were instrumental in Trump's wider efforts to undermine the election results entering the office and staying for hours. The security video from the elections office in the county about 200 miles (320 kilometers) southeast of Atlanta offers a glimpse of the lengths Trump's allies went in service of his fraudulent election claims. It further shows how access allegedly was facilitated by local officials entrusted with protecting the security of elections while raising concerns about sensitive voting technology being released into the public domain. Georgia wasn't the only state where voting equipment was accessed after the 2020 presidential election. Important information about voting systems also was compromised in election offices in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Colorado. Election security experts worry the information obtained — including complete copies of hard drives — could be exploited by those who want to interfere with future elections.

"The system is only as secure as the people who are en-



In this Jan. 19, 2021 image taken from Coffee County, Ga., security video, Cathy Latham, bottom, who was the chair of the Coffee County Republican Party at the time, greets a team of computer experts from data solutions company SullivanStrickler at the county elections office in Douglas, Ga.

Associated Press

trusted to keep it secure," said lawyer David Cross, who represents plaintiffs in a long-running lawsuit over Georgia's voting machines. The Coffee County security footage was obtained through that lawsuit, which alleges that Georgia's touchscreen voting machines are vulnerable to attack and should be replaced by hand-marked paper ballots. The suit long predates and is unrelated to false allegations of widespread election fraud pushed by Trump and his allies after the 2020 election.

The alleged breach in Coffee County's elections office also has caught the attention of Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis, who is overseeing an investigation into whether Trump and his allies illegally tried to influence the 2020 election results in Georgia. Last month, Willis cited the Coffee County activity, among other things, when she sought to compel testimony from Sidney Powell, an attorney who was deeply involved in Trump's effort to undo the election results.

Emails and other records show Powell and other attorneys linked to Trump helped arrange for a team from data solutions com-

pany SullivanStrickler to travel to Coffee County, which Trump won by nearly 40 percentage points.

The surveillance video, emails and other documents that shed light on what happened there in January 2021 were produced in response to subpoenas issued in the voting machine lawsuit and were obtained by The Associated Press. Parts of the security video appear to contradict claims by some of the local officials:

— Footage captures Cathy Latham, then chair of the Coffee County Republican Party, arriving at the elections office shortly after 11:30 a.m. on Jan. 7, 2021, the day after the violent assault on the U.S. Capitol. Just a few weeks earlier, she was one of 16 Georgia Republicans who signed a certificate falsely stating that Trump had won the state and declaring that they were the state's "duly elected and qualified" electors.

A few minutes after her arrival, she is seen outside greeting SullivanStrickler Chief Operating Officer Paul Maggio and two other people. Less than 10 minutes later, she escorts two other men into the building. The video shows her leaving the elections office just

before 1:30 p.m., roughly two hours after she greeted the SullivanStrickler team. She returns a little before 4 p.m. and then leaves around 6:15 p.m.

Latham said under oath during a deposition in August that she stopped by the elections office that evening for "Just a few minutes" and left before 5 p.m. Pressed on whether she had been there earlier in the day, Latham said she couldn't recall but suggested her schedule as a teacher would not have allowed it.

Robert Cheeley, a lawyer for Latham said in an emailed statement that his client doesn't remember all the details of that day. But he said she "would not and has not knowingly been involved in any impropriety in any election" and "has not acted improperly or illegally."

— The video also shows Eric Chaney, a member of Coffee County's election board, arriving shortly before 11 a.m. the same day and going in and out several times before leaving for the night around 7:40 p.m. Lawyers for the plaintiffs in the voting machine lawsuit wrote in a court filing that a photo produced by SullivanStrickler's COO shows Chaney in the office as the

copying is happening.

During a deposition last month, Chaney declined to answer many questions about that day, citing the Fifth Amendment. But when an attorney representing the county reached out to him in April regarding questions from the The Washington Post, Chaney wrote, "I am not aware of nor was I present at the Coffee County Board of Elections and Registration's office when anyone illegally accessed the server or the room in which it is contained." Chaney resigned from the elections board last month, days before his deposition.

Attempts to reach Chaney by phone were unsuccessful, and his lawyer did not respond to an email seeking comment.

— About two weeks after the initial breach, video shows Misty Hampton — then the county elections director — arriving at the elections office at 4:20 p.m. on Jan. 18, when it was closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day. She unlocked the door and let in two men — Doug Logan and Jeff Lenberg, who have been active in efforts to challenge the 2020 election results.

Logan founded Cyber Ninjas, which participated in a partisan and ultimately discredited review of the 2020 election in Maricopa County, Arizona. The two men remained inside until just after 8 p.m. and then spent more than nine hours there the next day. Lenberg returned for brief visits on at least three more days later that month.

Hampton resigned as elections supervisor in February 2021 after elections board officials said she falsified her timesheets. Attempts by the AP to reach her were unsuccessful.

In a statement released by its attorney, SullivanStrickler said the company was retained by attorneys to forensically copy voting machines used in the 2020 election and had no reason to believe they would ask its employees to do anything improper. □

Juul to pay nearly \$440M to settle states' teen vaping probe

By **MATTHEW PERRONE and DAVE COLLINS**

Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) —

Electronic cigarette maker Juul Labs has agreed to pay nearly \$440 million to settle a two-year investigation by 33 states into the marketing of its high-nicotine vaping products, which have long been blamed for sparking a national surge in teen vaping. Connecticut Attorney General William Tong announced the deal Tuesday on behalf of the states plus Puerto Rico, which joined together in 2020 to probe Juul's early promotions and claims about the benefits of its technology as a smoking alternative.

The settlement, which includes numerous restrictions on how Juul can market its products, resolves one of the biggest legal threats facing the beleaguered company, which still faces nine separate lawsuits from other states. Additionally, Juul faces hundreds of personal lawsuits brought on behalf of teenagers and others who say they became addicted to the company's vaping products.

The states' investigation found that Juul marketed its e-cigarettes to underage teens with launch parties, product giveaways and ads and social media posts using youthful models, according to a statement. "We think that this will go a long way in stemming the flow of youth vaping," Tong said at a news conference at his Hartford office. "I'm under no illusions and cannot claim that it will stop youth vaping," he said. "It continues to be an epidemic. It continues to be a huge problem. But we have essentially taken a big chunk out of what was once a market leader, and by their conduct, a major offender."

The \$438.5 million will be paid out over a period of six to 10 years. Tong said Connecticut's payment of at least \$16 million will go toward vaping prevention and education efforts. Juul previously settled lawsuits

in Arizona, Louisiana, North Carolina and Washington. The settlement total amounts to about 25% of Juul's U.S. sales of \$1.9 billion last year. Tong said it was an "agreement in principle," meaning the states will be finalizing the settlement documents over the next several weeks.

Most of the limits imposed by Tuesday's settlement won't immediately affect Juul, which halted use of parties, giveaways and other promotions after coming under scrutiny several years ago. The company currently makes up about one third of the U.S. retail vaping market, down from 75% several years ago.

Teen use of e-cigarettes skyrocketed in the years following Juul's 2015 launch, leading the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to declare an "epidemic" of underage vaping among young people. Health experts said the unprecedented increase risked hooking a generation of young people on nicotine. But since 2019 Juul has mostly been in retreat, dropping all U.S. advertising and pulling its fruit and candy flavors from store shelves.

The biggest blow came earlier this summer when the FDA moved to ban all Juul e-cigarettes from the market. Juul challenged that ruling in court, and the FDA has since reopened its scientific review into the company's technology.

The FDA review is part of a sweeping effort by regulators to bring scrutiny to the multibillion-dollar vaping industry after years of delays. The agency has authorized a handful of e-cigarettes from Juul's competitors for adult smokers looking for a less harmful alternative to cigarettes.

While Juul's early marketing focused on young, urban professionals, the company has since shifted to pitching its product as an alternative nicotine source for older smokers.

"We remain focused on our future as we fulfill our mission to transition adult



Packaging for an electronic cigarette and menthol pods from Juul Labs is displayed on Feb. 25, 2020, in Pembroke Pines, Fla.
Associated Press

smokers away from cigarettes — the number one cause of preventable death — while combating underage use," the company said in a statement. Juul has agreed to refrain from a host of marketing

practices as part of the settlement. They include not using cartoons, paying social media influencers, depicting people under 35, advertising on billboards and public transportation and placing ads in any out-

lets unless 85% of their audience are adults.

The deal also includes restrictions on where Juul products may be placed in stores, age verification on all sales and limits to online and retail sales.

"These are some of the toughest mandates at any point on any industry," Tong said, "which is incredibly important because at the end of the day this is about protecting our kids and protecting all of us from a very significant public health risk."

Juul initially sold its high-nicotine pods in flavors like mango, mint and cream. The products became a scourge in U.S. high schools, with students vaping in bathrooms and hallways between classes. □



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California and the West broil in record heat wave

By ADAM BEAM

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)

— A record-setting heat wave made life miserable in much of the West on Tuesday, with California stretching into its second week of excessive heat that taxed the state's power supply and threatened power shortages that could prompt blackouts while people were desperately trying to stay cool.

The California Independent System Operator, the entity that oversees the state's electrical grid, said there could be "rotating power outages" Tuesday evening when demand for power could reach an all-time high. Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom urged residents to conserve, warning in a video message that "the risk for outages is real and it's immediate."

"This heat wave is on track to be both the hottest and the longest on record for the state and many parts of the West for the month of September," Newsom said. "Everyone has to do their part to help step up for just a few more days."

California's state capital of Sacramento tied a record Tuesday with its 41st day of temperatures reaching at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit (38 degrees Celsius). And there was a chance the city would break its all-time high temperature of 114 degrees Fahrenheit (46 degrees Celsius) set in 1925, according to the National Weather Service.

Sacramento native Deb-



Rick Fitzpatrick holds a dog after evacuating from the Fairview Fire Monday, Sept. 5, 2022, near Hemet, Calif.

Associated Press

bie Chang was out walking in Capitol Park on Tuesday morning, pulling a wagon of Pop-Tarts and water to hand out to homeless people. She lives in an old house that relies on wall-mounted units that she says don't work so well. The temperature reached 91 degrees (33 C) in her house Monday night.

"The past few years in California, it's really rough," she said. "I really love this state. And growing up I never imagined I'd exactly want to live outside of California, unless maybe internationally. But this is very difficult." In neighboring Nevada, Reno set a record of 102 degrees (39 C) on Monday while in Utah's Salt Lake

City temperatures were about 20 degrees higher than normal, hitting 105 degrees (40.5 C) on Tuesday, the hottest September day recorded going back to 1874.

Scientists say climate change has made the West warmer and drier over the last three decades and will continue to make weather more extreme and wildfires more frequent and destructive. In the last five years, California has experienced the largest and most destructive fires in state history.

A wildfire that started Friday in the Northern California community of Weed killed two people and one that erupted Monday and

spread rapidly in the Hemet area of Southern California also killed two people. Authorities said they were found in the same area and apparently died while trying to flee the flames. Though the heat wave was likely to peak in most places on Tuesday, extremely high temperatures are expected to continue for several more days.

"It is a genuinely dangerous event from a human health perspective," said Daniel Swain, a climate scientist with the University of California, Los Angeles Institute for Environment and Sustainability.

Sacramento County officials were using the air-conditioned lobbies of

some of their public buildings as cooling centers for people with nowhere else to go and offering free transportation for people who could not get there. Officials even handed out motel vouchers to some homeless people through a program they normally reserve for the winter, according to county spokeswoman Janna Haynes.

"While a lot of people can stay home, a lot of people do not have a home to stay in," Haynes said.

In state office buildings, thermostats were being set at 85 degrees (29 C) at 5 p.m. to conserve electricity. Sacramento native Ariana Clark said she couldn't remember it ever being this hot for this long before. She said she turned her air conditioner off in the afternoons to conserve energy and kept her 9-month old son, Benito, cool by filling up a bucket for him to play in outside.

"As long as he's keeping cool that's all that matters," Clark said.

Juliana Hinch, who moved to Sacramento from San Diego 2 1/2 years ago said she has never seen heat like this before. She said some wetlands by her house have mostly dried up, so she leaves water in her front yard "for other random animals," including cats, squirrels and coyotes. Hinch said she once lived in Washington state but moved away because it was too cold. Now, she said "that sounds like a good problem to have." □



World's second-tallest roller coaster is permanently closing

SANDUSKY, Ohio (AP) — An amusement park in Ohio announced Tuesday it would be permanently closing the world's second-tallest roller coaster.

The decision by Cedar Point comes a year after a small metal object flew off the 420-foot (128-meter) tall Top Thrill Dragster coaster and struck a woman in the head at the park in Sandusky. A state investigation found no evidence that the park acted illegally or had reason to believe the ride was unsafe.

The ride has remained closed since the Aug. 15, 2021 accident. Park officials did not say if the

accident influenced their decision to permanently close the coaster, which has operated for 19 years and drawn 18 million riders.

In a statement announcing the closure, the park noted it "legacy of ride innovation continues. Our team is hard at work, creating a new and reimagined ride experience." It said more details about its plans would be disclosed in the future.

The Kingda Ka roller coaster at Six Flags Great Escape in Jackson Township, New Jersey, is considered the world's tallest with a 456-foot (139-meter) elevation. □

Taiwan leader cites threat of Chinese 'cognitive warfare'

By HUIZHONG WU

Associated Press

HENGCHUN, Taiwan (AP)

— Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen said Tuesday that China is conducting "cognitive warfare" by spreading misinformation in addition to its regular military incursions into nearby waters and airspace intended to intimidate the self-governing island. Experts have warned that China has made substantial inroads within Taiwanese mass media and could plant false narratives in social media and elsewhere to erode military morale and public confidence in the event it makes good on its threat to use force to take control of the island it claims as its own territory.

"The situation around the Taiwan Strait continues to be tense, and the threat has never ceased," Tsai said in a speech during a visit to an air defense and missile battalion in the eastern country of Hualien.

"In addition to frequent intrusions by China's aircraft and ships, China also conducted cognitive warfare, using false information to create disturbance in minds of people," the president said. Tsai also referenced China's use of



In this photo released by the Taiwan Presidential Office, Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen visits Taiwanese soldiers near the sign for Hualien Defense in Hualien, in eastern Taiwan on Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2022.

drones "to increase pressure on Taiwan's military," following incidents in which Taiwanese troops based on islands just off the Chinese coast warned off, and in once case shot down unmanned aerial vehicles that had been hovering over their positions.

Anti-drone defenses are included in a 12.9% increase in Taiwan's defense budget for next year. The rise will increase total spending

to \$13.8 billion, or roughly 2.4% of GDP. Taiwan on Tuesday also launched military exercises on the Hengchun Peninsula in the far south of the island, simulating ground warfare against an invading enemy aided by Apache attack helicopters. "We will continue to hold the attitude of being prepared for war," Lt. Col. Jing Feng-huang told reporters at the site of the drills. "We will not shy away

from war but will not seek it out." The exercises began with snipers firing at targets, followed by two Apaches blasting away at hillside targets. Troops also fired rounds from M109 howitzers and 105mm armored vehicle assault guns, as well as Javelin anti-tank weapons that have proven highly effective against Russian armor in the Ukraine conflict, which some have likened to a potential Chinese at-

tack on Taiwan. The exercises will also feature joint drills with Taiwan's air force on Wednesday. While the exercises are routine and conducted multiple times a year, media were given an unusual degree of access, possibly in response to the current tensions. Alongside promoting Taiwan's high-tech economy, Tsai has made strengthening the island's defenses a key feature of her second and last four-year term in office. That includes bulking up the domestic defense industry as well as procuring more weaponry from the U.S., including fighter jets and missiles, to resist a potential Chinese attack or attempted blockade.

On Friday, the Biden administration announced a \$1.09 billion sale, including \$355 million for Harpoon air-to-sea missiles and \$85 million for Sidewinder air-to-air missiles, the State Department said. The largest portion of the sale, however, is a \$655 million logistics support package for Taiwan's surveillance radar program, which provides air defense warnings. Early warning air defense systems have become more important as China has stepped up military drills near Taiwan. □

Associated Press

Dutch farm minister resigns after protests over pollution

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP)

— The Dutch agriculture minister has unexpectedly resigned, telling reporters he wasn't the right person for the job following a tumultuous summer of protests by farmers over pollution regulations.

Henk Staghouwer, who held the position for only nine months, announced his decision Monday night. He had just returned from Brussels, where he negotiated an agreement with the European Commission to scrap a Dutch exemption to manure spreading limits.

The Netherlands, along with Denmark, Ireland and the Flanders region of Belgium, had been allowed to

exceed caps on how much manure farmers could return to their fields because of the country's comparatively small land area. But Brussels wants to phase out this dispensation because the Dutch are failing to meet EU water quality standards.

The country's lucrative agriculture sector has been in crisis since a 2019 court ruling forced the government to slash emissions of nitrogen oxide and ammonia, which livestock produce. Thousands of farmers have staged protests, blocking cities with tractors and burning hay bales along highways.

A 60-year-old former baker, Staghouwer had been

tasked with transitioning the sector away from intensive farming practices and buying out farmers to reduce total emissions.

The government allocated an extra 24.3 billion euros (\$24.2 billion) to tackle the problem. Last week Staghouwer told the Cabinet that he would be unable to meet a mid-September deadline to present a plan for the transition.

"I respect his brave decision," Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte wrote on Twitter, but others were less praising. Member of parliament Caroline van der Plas of The Farmer-Citizen Movement party (BBB) said "he was totally unsuitable" for the job.

Bart Kemp of farmers' organization Agractie told Dutch public broadcaster NOS that Staghouwer was "a friendly man, but not a

decisive person." Staghouwer's role will temporarily be taken on by the former agricultural minister Carola Schouten. □



Protesting farmers talk at a blockade outside a distribution center for supermarket chain Aldi in the town of Drachten, northern Netherlands, on July 4, 2022.

Associated Press

In flood-stricken Pakistan, rains damage archeological site

By **MUNIR AHMED**

Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — In flood-stricken Pakistan where an unprecedented monsoon season has killed hundreds of people, the rains now threaten a famed archeological site dating back 4,500 years, the site's chief official said Tuesday.

The ruins of Mohenjo Daro — located in southern Sindh province near the Indus River and a UNESCO World Heritage Site — are considered among the best preserved urban settlements in South Asia. They were discovered in 1922 and to this day, mystery surrounds the disappearance of its civilization, which coincided with those of ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.

The swelling waters of the Indus, a major river in this part of the world, have wreaked havoc as heavy rains and massive flooding unleashed devastation across much of Pakistan. At least 1,343 people have been killed and millions have lost their homes in the



Women carry belongings salvaged from their flooded home after monsoon rains, in the Qambar Shahdadkot district of Sindh Province, of Pakistan, Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2022.

surging waters, with many experts blaming the unusually heavy monsoon rains on climate change.

The flooding has not directly hit Mohenjo Daro but the record-breaking rains have inflicted damage on the ruins of the ancient city, said Ahsan Abbasi, the site's cu-

rator.

"Several big walls, which were built nearly 5,000 years ago, have collapsed because of the monsoon rains," Abbasi told The Associated Press.

He said dozens of construction workers under the supervision of archae-

ologists have started the repair work. Abbasi did not give an estimated cost of the damages at Mohenjo Daro.

Abbasi said the civilization at Mohenjo Daro, also known as "Mound of the Dead" in the local Sindhi language, built an elab-

Associated Press

orate drainage system, which has been critical in flooding in the past.

Though the floods have touched all of Pakistan, the Sindh province has been among the worst hit.

On Monday, army engineers made a second cut into an embankment at Lake Manchar, Pakistan's largest freshwater lake, to release rising waters in hopes of saving the nearby city of Sehwan from major flooding.

The water from the lake has already inundated dozens of nearby villages, forcing hundreds of families to leave their mudbrick homes in a hurry, many fleeing in panic.

Meanwhile, rescue operations continued Tuesday with troops and volunteers using helicopters and boats to get those stranded out of the flooded areas and to nearest relief camps. Tens of thousands of people are already living in such camps, and thousands more have taken shelter on roadsides on higher ground. □

Suspected jihadi bomb hits convoy in Burkina Faso; 35 dead



An aerial view of Djibo town, in northern Burkina Faso on Feb. 18, 2021.

Associated Press

By **ARSENE KABORE and SAM MEDNICK**

Associated Press

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso (AP) — A suspected jihadi roadside bomb has hit a convoy in northern Burkina Faso, killing at least 35 people and injuring dozens more.

The supply convoy escorted by the army was

hit Monday while driving between Bourzanga and Djibo towns with one of the vehicles carrying civilians, the governor of Sahel region, Lt. Col. Rodolphe Sorgho, said in a statement. The wounded have been evacuated and the area of the explosion has been secured, he said.

Although no group imme-

diately claimed responsibility for the bomb, it is suspected to be by Islamic extremist rebels. Burkina Faso has been ravaged by violence linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group in which thousands have been killed.

This is the fifth explosion in Soum province since August, particularly around Djibo, which has been under siege by jihadis for months, according to an internal security report for aid workers seen by The Associated Press.

A double explosion last month between Djibo and Namssiguia killed at least 15 people, said the report. A military coup in January ousted the country's democratically elected government claiming they could better secure the country from the extremists.

Monday's attack comes one day after interim President Lt. Col. Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba spoke to

the nation saying the junta had achieved some progress in pushing back the jihadis.

"We have made many efforts since we came to power ... Our efforts have begun to bear fruit at the military operational level," he said.

This latest attack, however, damages the credibility of Damiba's claim, say analysts.

"Aside from the staggering casualty toll, the timing of the incident is unfortunate, given that only two days ago President Damiba made a speech in an attempt to convince the public that the country was making progress," said Henri Nsaibia, senior researcher at the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project.

"While his speech was praised, many commentators criticized the lack of a balance sheet detailing the progress he claimed to

have made," he said.

While Burkina Faso's military struggles to stem the extremist violence, the humanitarian crisis is escalating. Nearly 2 million people have been displaced — making it one of the fastest growing displacement crises in the world alongside Ukraine and Mozambique. More than 600,000 people are facing emergency hunger, creating the country's worst food crisis in a decade, according to a statement this week by 28 international aid groups in Burkina Faso.

"Too often, displacement and hunger come as a one-two punch," said Hassane Hamadou, country director of the Norwegian Refugee Council. "People forced to move have left behind their fields and livestock. Many displaced families report being down to one meal a day in order to allow children to eat twice." □

Large amount of patients per general practitioner becoming a problem for General Health Insurance in Aruba

ORANJESTAD – As they had been doing for a few months, last July the association of general practitioners of Aruba (HAVA) called attention to the huge amount of patients that each of them has under their care, highlighting the problem that Aruba doesn't have enough general practitioners, and each of them has an average of 2,300 patients under their care.

In a press release, HAVA points out that in order to make sure that the patient can receive the quality of care that the patient needs from their family doctor, stakeholders need to work together to realize a quantity of patients that the general practitioner can handle in a sustainable manner.

"HAVA's general practitioners want to reach a situation where the primary care system is not overloaded, so that they, as specialists in their field of work, can provide the best care possible. The experience right now is that because of the expansion of the amount of care being requested, additional administrative responsibilities and demands for quality, there is not enough time for each patient to receive the care that they deserve. This is alarming and HAVA is asking for attention to be paid to this issue."

The doctors association also indicated that "only together we can arrive to a durable situation with the goal of improving our healthcare in Aruba, where all parties involved will benefit."

Regarding this development, PR for the General Health Insurance AZV, Solange Tchong, during an interview expressed that general practitioners remain as a challenge, because there are many of them that are at full capacity, limited availability, and this is a challenge particu-



larly for patients when they say they want to change doctors.

AZV allows this, there are options for example when a person changes their address from San Nicolas to Playa, but it remains a challenge because the general practitioners are not easily found. Tchong assured that AZV is aware of the issue.

"Together with HAVA we are trying every time to

come closer to each other, to continue talking and discussing the issue of the amount of patients registered for each general practitioner. This issue has our attention, and we are even trying to find a possibility to organize this in a different way, making it more efficient and maybe even more helpful for AZV's clients", Tchong commented.

AZV has been showing

development in their AZV phone app, called 'Digital zorg pas', where the clients can have their health insurance card from AZV in a digital format. According to Tchong, currently they have 66,000 clients registered. They also have parents who have registered their children. She said they also have a service for older adults, who are not very skilled with their smartphone, where they

are available to help the person on the phone or in person at their offices in Rumbastraat.

"What's important is that once you have the AZV app, we make sure to give you notifications in case there is any information from AZV, we publish it on the app. We are happy with this and we hope that more clients will download the app", she said.

Regarding medical care, in case a client feels that they are not receiving sufficient care when they are suffering from illness or injury, AZV will look into it, according to AZV's director, Edwin Jacobs.

"If you can find a better solution abroad, it means we will send you abroad. But mainly it is a specialist that gives the order to send a patient abroad for exceptional cases, where the clients make the request to go abroad and they go", he said. □





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ORANJESTAD — One thing is for certain: Chef Scott Scheuerman and his team are famous for getting people hooked, just like the fish on your plate. You will get the taste of home fused with Caribbean while dining in elegance. Scheuerman will tell how Aqua Grill established its name since opening in 2002, and why it reaped accolades from such prestigious travel publications as Fodor's, who says, "This hip restaurant is heaven on earth for seafood lovers, who will find fresh fish galore..." Now is your chance to taste Aqua Grill's NEW seasonal menu and create a lifetime culinary memory.

'A Scheuer thing'

Secretly, we all know that the success of a restaurant begins in the kitchen. That is where the chef creates his magic and for Aqua Grill the culinary team has won an assortment of awards for their continuous delivery of 'haute-cuisine del mar.' Classic seafood is mingled with contemporary ideas resulting in surprising dishes that soon made the restaurant a must-dine, confirmed by established travel media specialists like Fodor's and Frommer's. American-born Scheuerman, executive chef of Aqua Grill, is thrilled about 'his restaurant'. "We started out as a New England style seafood restaurant, patterned after Boston style. But we quickly blended into some Caribbean, local flair... if you will. We do still offer the traditional New England dishes like whole Maine lobster, northern seafood plates like the salmon, tuna and swordfish. We buy also from the local fisherman to offer Caribbean dishes like snapper and grouper which are number one sellers in our restaurant being

the most prevalent local fishes. Catches like wahoo, mahi mahi and brasil are welcome too, anything that comes out of the water we embrace."

Fresh import from Boston

Aqua Grill flies in their own shipments on a weekly basis mostly from Boston because the price quality balance is the best, says the chef. "We are unique in this. Number one priority is buying fresh, we mean not frozen. Our original concept is New England seafood and we stick to that concept. They have a wonderful assortment of oysters and lobsters as well." Aqua Grill also offers international fusion type of menu items; actually all you wish for is there. A very balanced menu awaits you. "And we have options for meat lovers and vegetarians/vegans too. We, however, do not mix it up too much because we believe we do not want to lose our identity as a seafood restaurant," Scheuerman adds.

Sublime menu

Now is the time to indulge in Aqua Grill's dinner experience. The established restaurant offers a sensational menu. We present to you a Raw Bar with among others fresh Oysters on the half Shell, Littleneck Clams, Peruvian Ceviche and Lobster Salad. Steamed Dumplings and Prawns or Steamed Mussels seduce



you from the open view kitchen.

After that continue your gastronomic trip to heaven with the house specialties like Main Lobster, steamed or broiled or maybe you crave for the best Alaska King Crab Legs you have ever tasted?

You haven't reached your destination yet because there are more main course options to blow you away: Seared Chilean Sea Bass, Cioppino or Blackened Tuba are just some to mention.

Take a pick out of Aqua Grill's delicious desserts to finally conclude yes, this beats it all. We will be back for more. □

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Honoring of loyal visitors at Casa Del Mar Beach Resort

EAGLE BEACH - Recently, Aruba Tourism Authority representative Kimberley Richardson had the great pleasure in honoring many loyal Aruba visitors with their distinctive certificates. These certificates are a way to say "Masha Danki" for continuously choosing Aruba as a favorite vacation destination. The titles are as following: 10+ years "Distinguished Visitor", 20+ years "Goodwill Ambassador" and 36+ years "Emerald Ambassador".

According to Kimberley, the spotlight today was on Ms. Milan Lawrence from Syosset, New York. Ms. Lawrence has been coming down the island for over 25 years consecutively with her family. Over the years they have been bringing many family members and friends as well.

This symbolic honorary title is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a to-

ken of appreciation to the guests who visit Aruba between the 10-20-35 and more consecutive year mark.

This wonderful and thoughtful young woman stated that she loves visiting the island very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, its white sandy beaches and turquoise waters, its picturesque sunsets, its safety, its variety of foods, and Aruba's warm and friendly people whom have become like family to her.

Ms. Richardson together with the representatives of the Casa Del Mar Beach Resort presented the Goodwill Ambassador certificate to the honoree, handed over some presents, and also thanked her for continuously choosing Aruba as her favorite vacation destination and as her home-away-from-home. □



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Article by Etnia Nativa

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Prohibited by law to take seashells away

Episode CLXX - 170

Etnia Nativa through Island Insight shares our native cultural awareness, educates and safeguarding Aruba's heritage by elevating each reader into an island keeper state of mind. Be encouraged to discover in every episode the true native effect, live it, discover more reasons to love Aruba and live up your island adventure in an authentic revealing way.

Our island is a tiny tourist destination with a fragile ecosystem, covering thousands of years of history. Here is when Etnia Nativa's main objective comes to mind, sharing information through education. We believe in when you love and value what you have; ones greatest desire becomes to protect it.

By now we are very much aware that massive industrialization has devastated marine life and depleted the bio diversity of costal habitats and natural environment all around the globe. By means of our episode we inform and share our concern when one million tourists carries away whatever they pick up in nature on our island, like seashells, which today are protected by law. Since many could have and historical as well as an archaeological values or significance.

We know that massive industry devastates marine life and habitat worldwide. At least 50,000 mollusk species inhabit the Earth, some shells are harvested for their meat, others like the chambered nautilus, known for its beautiful, coiled multi-colored protective casings are collected solely for decorative purposes.

Government of Aruba has established by law AB 2018 no. 77 on December 21, 2018 several marine protected areas or zones, under the administration of the Aruba National Park Foundation (FPNA) on April 16, 2019 Currently, marine protected areas vary in type and range from wildlife refuges to facilities research. Within these areas, human activity is restricted for conservation purposes to protect both natural and cultural resources, in accordance with the international CITES treaty and our local law that protects our flora and fauna, it is completely prohibited to take any seashells, sand, coral, stones or anything you find, outside the island, this in order to respect and protect our environment. Concealed items in your luggage will be confiscated and



the perpetrator may incur high legal costs of attorneys, fines and non grata suspension. Cultural and historical heritage.

However this was not always, our ancestors used marine shells were used in making rhythms, body decoration, jewelry, tools and weapons etc. Since the existence of man, raw marine materials were scrutinized for the elaboration of all kinds of unimaginable artifacts and as a useful ingredients and a variety of purposes.

Tribal artisans were highly regarded artists and some of them believed in the ability to transferring spiritual powers by their work. Survival and culture goes hand in hand and the artisan uses everything he can put his hands on. Shells had their physical purpose, and the need of exhibiting ones social status. All this had its incessant demand on natural supply when it came to the hand of experienced craftsmen who elaborated such social outfits.

These artistic creations worked perfectly as a medal of bravery for a warrior as a token of appreciation or as a tired magic totem, a "counter" to ward off omens and bad spells. Others had to promote healing and spread cleansing powers.

Strombus shells or Conch were on many occasions the basic material used in the manufacture of the so-called Quiripa

beads. Many that were found had one or more holes in it and in some cases a semi-drilled hole that is believed that was unfinished. Many "button" as Aruban's calls these shell beads for their similarity to a button, were discovered and rescued during archaeological excavations in many parts of the island. Santa Cruz between many was a highly organized and an important central settlement during Aruba's precolonial era. In Sta. Cruz is a place called "Boton" referring to the many shell buttons that were found in that area.

If you love to explore Aruba we encourage you to do something different, outside the tourist grid. Become one of our exclusive visitors at Etnia Nativa, where you will be able to admire native art collections, archaeological artifacts and historical furniture while the installation itself and the lecturer will transform your mind set from an simple observer in to an conservator.□

Since 1994, Etnia Nativa, which is a private residence and home of our columnist/artist, Anthony Croes, sharing with tourism an authentic view of Aruba.

Anthony guides each guest step by step during the visit so take some time away from the beach scene, book your visit and feel the native effect! R.S.V.P. etnianativa03@gmail.com or whatsapp + 297 592 2702.



Arikok National Park urges the local community to plan more fruit trees to save parakeet population

ORANJESTAD – Arikok National Park has a conservation plan in process for the parakeets of Aruba. Preparation surveys have been carried out in the past, as well as analysis of the situation of the local parakeets in Aruba, studying the areas where they live, the dangers they face, and the different ways to preserve this bird.

Currently it can be said that not all is well with the Prikichi – Aruba's endemic brown-throated parakeet – and there needs to be a strong push for awareness in the local community, together with an action plan for the conservation of this unique bird.

Giancarlo Nunes, Research & Conservation Manager at the Arikok National Park Foundation explained to our reporter that all around the world, the parrot species is in danger, and all around the world there have been successful programs for bringing back some of these birds.

The foundation had this analyzed and based on all the collected results they created an action plan for the conservation of the Prikichi. This is something that they're currently busy with, and something that has various aspects like a survey on the sort of food that is still available for the bird, the situation of animals that were introduced to Aruba that are a danger to Prikichi – dogs, cats and boas – but also people who grab the Prikichi from their nest to stick into a cage or to sell.

"In this process, a lot of nests are lost, so with all these threats we wrote a conservation program that involves different aspects to expand the Prikichi population", Mr. Nunes said. This will consist of a breeding program to create more Prikichi, but also it is necessary to start by knowing how many Prikichi are still left in Aruba. A survey also needs to be carried out on the nests that are still present, which is one of the bigger problems because Prikichi like to make their nests in very old, very big trees, and there are



not a lot of these sort of plants left. Aruba has a lot of pest control, and Prikichi likes to nest where there are termites, so this bird is losing its nesting areas very fast.

A lot of attention needs to be given to awareness, so the local community is aware that a Prikichi does not belong in a cage – not even to save them from a dog or cat, even when done with a good heart, it doesn't help their population. "They need to be free, they need to fly around and breed in order for the population to come back", Mr. Nunes explains. The foundation will begin focusing also on reducing, through awareness, the instances of people coming into nature to seek Prikichi and taking them from their nests to bring home. Also there is a need to reduce the amount of cats on the streets, better control of the boa population, and see how other forms or programs of breeding can be introduced, for example by using artificial nests, as is being done with Aruba's burrowing owl, the Shoco.

All these programs, with their different aspects attached, have duration of at least ten years to be executed properly. Things always start with analysis, dialogue with stakeholders and the government – because the foundation cannot do things on their own, there is a lot that needs to be done in a team together with the government, and it is a very long process. All programs for species conservation take at least ten years to execute and develop, but according to Mr. Nunes, it will likely take more than ten years.

Back in the 90s, there were four very important areas in Aruba where Prikichi slept together, in large groups called roosting grounds. Right now, the foundation visited all these areas, and there are no Prikichi there. "That is also some-

thing very alarming that we need to be aware of, not all is well with the Prikichi. We need to take action to preserve this species, which is a unique endemic species only found on Aruba. If lost, we cannot bring it from anywhere else", Nunes explains.

The Prikichi that we have here is something that is Aruba's own, part of our natural and cultural identity which really is part of who we are as Arubans. According to the foundation, it is very important to work to save this bird.

The foundation said that something that surely the community of Aruba can do to help the Prikichi is planting more fruit trees in your yard. Not just laying cement, but at least plant a few fruit trees and let them grow large, like mango, mispel and others. "This will greatly help the Prikichi population. The more food we can produce for them, the better their situation will become." □



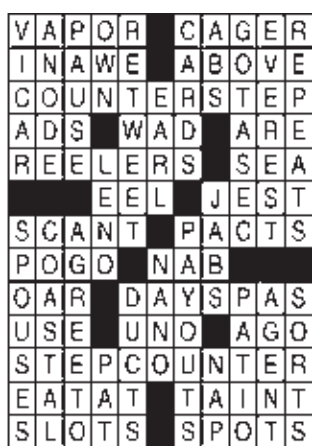
Michiel Oversteegen

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

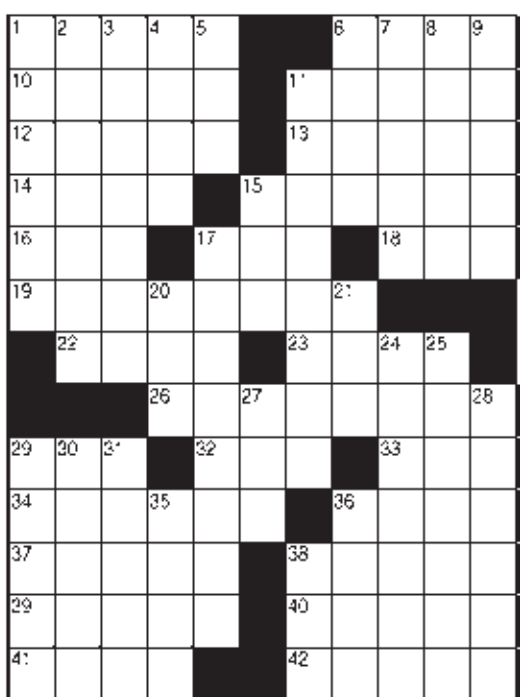
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26 Prophesied
29 Expected
32 Tire track
33 Be a contender
34 Overrun
36 Crooked
37 Latitude
38 River boat
39 Encrusted
40 Knight's wear
41 Ignored the limit



Yesterday's answer

17 Was able to buy
20 Field worker
21 Morse bit
24 Cop's words to a partner
25 Language spoken at some conventions
27 Regret
28 Hinders
29 Frisbees, e.g.
30 Open, in a way
31 Conjure up
35 Mimicked
36 Au naturel
38 Diamond club



AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

9-7 CRYPTOQUOTE

H RYGG QWXV FWO VYFD

RXTHJX YO MHV HF HFVPXG

YO VYFDV RXTHJX YO MHV H

VWFD. — LRUH HFDXSWJ

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: I'VE NEVER RUN INTO A PERSON WHO YEARNES FOR THEIR MIDDLE SCHOOL DAYS. — JEFF KINNEY

Millennial Money: Why you should increase credit limits now

By MELISSA LAMBARENA of NerdWallet

Relying on a credit limit in a shaky economy is the equivalent of expecting a weak bridge to weather a storm and carry you to survival.

It's not uncommon for credit card issuers to minimize their risk by lowering credit limits or closing accounts when there's potential for economic distress. Credit card issuers took these actions in the Great Recession and early in the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a 2022 report by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, perhaps due to changes in credit profiles, internal account performance metrics or shifts in the issuer's risk management policies. Even as an uncertain option, a credit limit is still a bridge worth preserving to supplement or back up an emergency fund, especially before a potential recession. There isn't a foolproof strategy to prevent an issuer from lowering credit limits or closing accounts, but some actions may minimize the impact to your wallet and credit scores.

KEEP CREDIT CARDS OPEN AND ACTIVE

In March and June 2020,



This Aug. 11, 2019 file photo shows Visa credit cards in New Orleans.

Associated Press

many accounts owned by cardholders, even those with high credit scores, were closed due to inactivity, according to a special issue brief by the CFPB that same year. Inactive cards aren't making the issuer money in fees, so they pose more risk to the issuer during tough times. It's worth keeping credit cards open and regularly charging planned purchases to give issuers one less reason to touch your account, but that might not be enough.

For Timothy Barnes, an auto mechanic based in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, it didn't matter that he was still employed in late

2020 with active accounts in good standing. A major issuer closed several of his accounts, scrapping over \$17,000 in available credit. "It was one day of buying something online and the credit card was declined," Barnes says. "They said it was a risk, but I didn't even miss one single payment." Previously, some lenders didn't provide cardholders with reasons for credit limit reductions.

In May 2022, the CFPB's advisory opinion on the Equal Credit Opportunity Act affirmed that lenders must provide an "adverse action notice" explaining the reason for unfavorable decisions. □

CVS to buy home health-care provider Signify for \$8 billion

DALLAS (AP) — Drugstore operator CVS Health Corp. said Monday that it will buy home-health provider Sig-

nify Health for \$8 billion. CVS said Signify has more than 10,000 employees including physicians and

nurses, a presence in every state, and offers technology platforms. "This acquisition will enhance our connection to consumers in the home and enables providers to better address patient needs as we execute our vision to redefine the health care experience," CVS CEO Karen Lynch said in a statement announcing the deal. The acquisition would continue CVS' effort to grow from its pharmacy-chain roots to other sectors of the health industry. In 2018, the Woonsocket, Rhode Island, company purchased health insurer Aetna for \$69 billion. □



A CVS Pharmacy is seen in Mount Lebanon, Pa., on Monday, May 3, 2021. On Monday, Sept. 5, 2022, drugstore operator CVS Health Corp. said that it will buy home-health provider Signify Health for \$8 billion.

Associated Press

East Med especially at risk as world heats up, report warns

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) —

The eastern Mediterranean and Middle East are warming almost twice as fast as the global average, with temperatures projected to rise up to 5 degrees Celsius (9 degrees Fahrenheit) by the end of the century if no action is taken to reverse the trend, a new report says.

The region will experience "unprecedented" heat waves, more severe and longer-lasting droughts and dust storms and rainfall shortages that will "compromise water and food security" for the region's 400 million people, according to a summary of the report released Tuesday. The eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East are more susceptible to warming trends because of their unique natural characteristics, like large desert expanses and lower water levels, the study said.

The report was prepared by an international group of scientists overseen by The Cyprus Institute's Climate and Atmosphere Research Center and the Max Planck Institute for Chemistry. Originally published in June in the journal Reviews of Geophysics, it aims to underscore the impact of climate change in the region ahead of the United Nations climate summit in Egypt this November.

Arid climate zones will expand northward and snow-capped mountains in more northern climes will diminish during this century, said Dr. George Zittis, who co-authored the report. Although the sea level in the region is projected to rise at a pace similar with other global estimates, many Mediterranean countries are unprepared to deal with it, he said.

"This would imply severe challenges for coastal infrastructure and agriculture and can lead to the salinization of coastal aquifers" warned Zittis. Saltier water from rising sea levels and low rainfall can severely damage crops and fisheries.



A couple walk at the salt lake during sunset in southeast coastal city of Larnaca in southeast Mediterranean island of Cyprus, on Sept. 5, 2022.

Associated Press

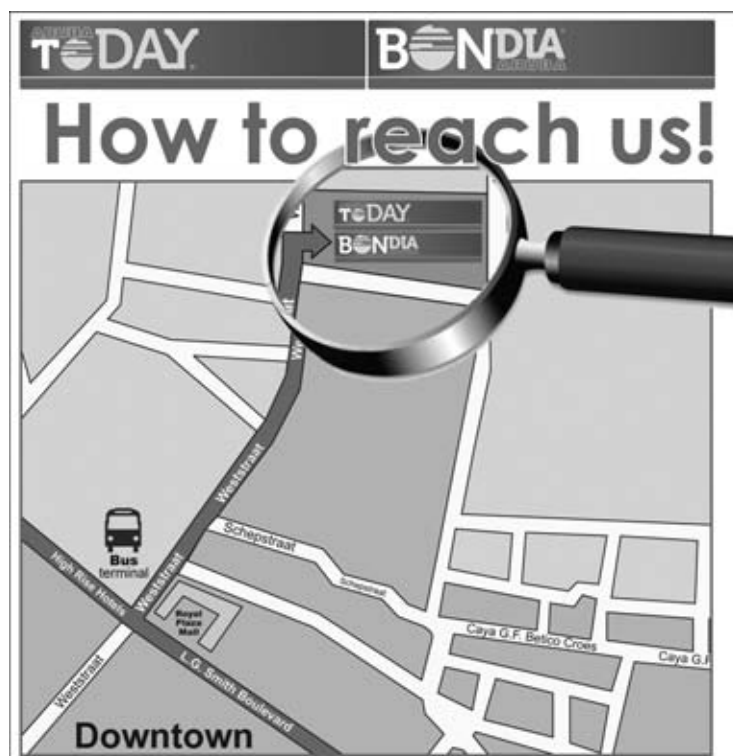
The region's most vulnerable groups, including the elderly, children and pregnant people, will face major health challenges, said Max Planck Institute Director Jos Lelieveld, who was part of the study. Many European nations already have initiatives to aid vulnerable people in extreme weather.

The region is rapidly overtaking the European Union as a source of greenhouse gases and becoming a major emitter on a global scale, the paper suggests. China, the U.S., India and the E.U. are currently the world's largest emitters. Several Mediterranean countries are also part of the European bloc.

If the Paris Agreement tar-

get of limiting warming to 1.5C (2.7F) is met, it would limit the temperature increase in the region to about 2C (3.6F), the study said. The report urged the region to quickly reduce its reliance on greenhouse gas emissions, especially in the energy and transportation sectors. The study's projections for the region are in line with other scientific studies, including a major report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change earlier this year.

The U.N.'s climate report termed the Mediterranean as a climate change "hot-spot" which is vulnerable to droughts, coastal erosion and heat waves. □



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RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Assistant Director

Xiomara Arends

Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks

Sales

Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Columnists

Anthony Croes

Weststraat 22

T: 582-7800

E: news@arubatoday.com

W: www.arubatoday.com

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Farrell and Gleeson reunite with Martin McDonagh in Venice

By LINDSEY BAHR

AP Film Writer

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Martin McDonagh has returned to the Venice International Film Festival with "The Banshees of Inisherin," which is having its world premiere Monday night in competition.

It's his first film since "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri," and a reunion with his "In Bruges" stars Colin Farrell and Brendan Gleeson.

Farrell on Monday said that he and McDonagh have talked about working together again, and they have a "mature agreement" where they'll accept if the other wants to pass. And yet, Farrell said, he also can't imagine "ever passing on anything (McDonagh) writes because he's such an extraordinary writer and I'm always so deeply moved emotionally and psychologically by the worlds he creates and the characters that



This image released by Searchlight Pictures shows Colin Farrell, left, and Brendan Gleeson in "The Banshees of Inisherin."

he designs." The film is set in 1923 on a remote island off Ireland's west coast. It tells a story about long-time friends Padraic (Farrell) and Colm (Gleeson) at a fraught moment when Colm suddenly decides to end the relationship. He's decided that Padraic is dull, and Padraic, in turn, is shattered.

"It's hard to ghost someone on an island," Farrell laughed. His character, he said, is the "human mani-

festation of a little donkey." Kerry Condon plays Padraic's sister Siobhan and Barry Keoghan is the tormented young Dominic, who try to help Padraic mend things.

"He has an innocence where he can't comprehend why his friend of so many years has cut him out," Farrell said. "It shakes him to his core ... He lives in a beautiful life and that beauty is taken away by Brendan's Colm."

Gleeson liked how the film

examined male friendship in a different way. But, he said, despite the time that it's set in, it is a "modern film" in how it presents these two friends.

"The way the idea that these men would talk to each other in a natural way about feelings is debatable if it would transpire at that point," Gleeson said.

The film also marks McDonagh's first production in Ireland, which he said was "a dream of mine." They

shot mostly in Inishmore, where his father was from. And before production started, they had several weeks of rehearsals in Galway. Farrell said it "felt so beautiful to be back where Martin's plays had been performed."

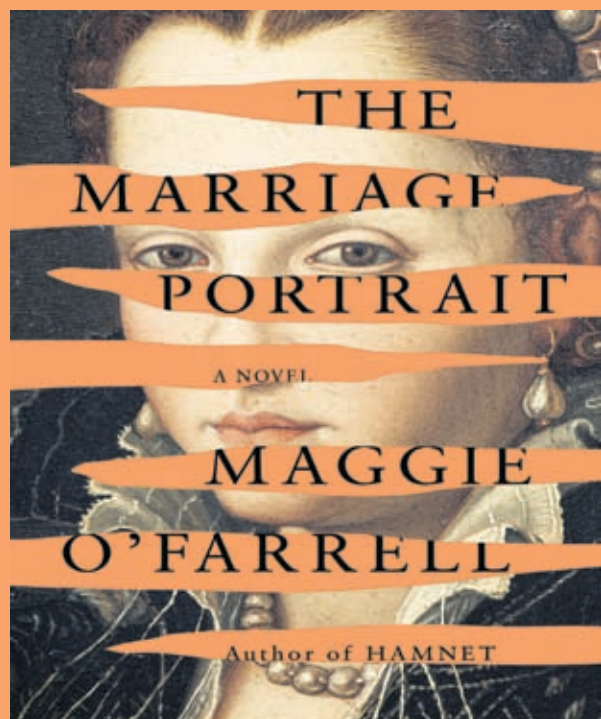
Venice is a bit of a good luck charm for McDonagh, who in 2017 received the festival's top screenwriting prize for "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri," which would go on to be a box office smash, get him a best picture and screenplay nomination at the Oscars and win two acting Oscars for Frances McDormand and Sam Rockwell.

"The Banshees of Inisherin" is competing for the Golden Lion and other top awards this year, against films like Todd Field's "TÁR" and Darren Aronofsky's "The Whale," before it opens in theaters on Oct. 21.

The 79th edition of the Venice Film Festival runs through Sept. 10. □

Associated Press

Reimagining the fate of a doomed Renaissance duchess



This cover image released by Knopf shows "The Marriage Portrait" by Maggie O'Farrell.

Associated Press

By JULIA RUBIN

Associated Press

Stories of high-born girls confined to castles, forced to marry young, and pressured to have sons on pain of death are the stuff of dark fantasy these days on HBO. Novelist Maggie O'Farrell comes at that scenario in a different, more psychological way, through the charac-

ter of a real girl in Renaissance Italy.

In her first novel since the lovely "Hamnet," which won a National Book Critics Circle Award and other prizes, O'Farrell again reaches back to the 16th century to imagine the inner life of a figure about whom the historical record is thin but intriguing.

In "Hamnet," that was Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's wife. Here, it's Lucrezia de' Medici, who died under suspicious circumstances in 1561 at just 16 years old. Although the official cause of death was illness, it was rumored that her husband of less than a year, Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, killed her.

That murkiness gives O'Farrell plenty of room to look for skips in the historical record and build Hitchcockian suspense.

The Renaissance palazzos and castellos portrayed here have gorgeous, sunlit exteriors but dark, thick-walled interiors. Norm-shattering art and commerce coexist with rigid social hierarchies and superstition.

Lucrezia was part of the most powerful family in Florence, the Medicis. Being a girl, she lived a confined existence, unable to venture much beyond her rooms. (The dim, dull life inside the palazzo contrasts with the glare of the lively square outside; an offhand description is given of a statue the Medicis have put outside their door — it's only Michelangelo's "David.")

Things slowly become even more claustrophobic after Lucrezia is married off against her will. The novel jumps back and forth in time, begin-

ning with the day she comes to believe she will be murdered, and diving all the way back to her conception. And although we are told her fate from the start, we come to believe that this teenager is a match for the evil simmering in the palace courts around her. Observant and compassionate, Lucrezia is an outsider in that world.

She finds some freedom in nature and art. But although she is a gifted artist, nobody considers any future for her other than as a powerful man's wife.

O'Farrell has cited Robert Browning's poem, "My Last Duchess," as inspiring her interest in this Renaissance story. The poem paints a creepy picture of Alfonso showing a stranger a portrait of his deceased wife, which he keeps behind a curtain so only he can look at it. O'Farrell found a real portrait of Lucrezia in a Florence gallery, and it radiated intelligence and mystery. The novel dwells on a technique popular in the Renaissance called "overpainting," in which you apply the final layers of paint on top of an existing image, either covering it or allowing the old and new images to merge. Lucrezia frequently uses this practice, just as she learns to hide her true self beneath a formal, superficial surface.

Likewise, O'Farrell has taken a historical footnote — the death of a 16-year-old duchess — and overlaid it with strokes of bravery, cruelty, love, loyalty and more to paint a different picture. □

Orlando City to take on Sac Republic for U.S. Open Cup title

By ANNE M. PETERSON
AP Sports Writer

Orlando City's pursuit of its first trophy in the U.S. Open Cup is personal for Benji Michel, who grew up in Orlando and was signed by the Lions as a homegrown player.

"It means everything. I mean, this is why we fight, this is what our job is," he said. "We don't just play to play, we want to play to win trophies. And we have an amazing opportunity." Major League Soccer's Lions host United Soccer League upstart Sacramento in the title match of the Open Cup on Wednesday night in Orlando, Florida. Sacramento is looking to become just the second lower-division club to win the championship in a quarter-century.

Orlando City, which joined MLS in 2015, has never won a title. The closest the Lions came was in 2020, when they were runners up in the MLS is Back tournament. In addition to a trophy, the Open Cup winner also earns a spot in the CONCACAF Champions League. But it's about more than just hardware for Michel, whose parents immigrated to the United States from Haiti. A self-described "bad



Orlando City's Benji Michel, left, and Arsenal's Rob Holding try to get control of a head ball during the second half of a Florida Cup friendly soccer match Wednesday, July 20, 2022, in Orlando, Fla. Associated Press

kid," Michel's big brother became his legal guardian and set him on a better path, which eventually led back to his hometown.

Michel played at the University of Portland, where he was Freshman of the Year for the West Coast Conference and was named an All-American his final year. He signed a homegrown contract with Orlando ahead of the 2019 season.

"I think I started taking soc-

cer seriously when I was 15. At that age, I got my first college offer. And that was that was pretty good. That's when I really decided OK, this is what I'm good at, this is what I can do," he said. Just last year, the 24-year-old striker got a call up to the senior U.S. national team, but he did not feature in a match.

Orlando defeated the New York Red Bulls 5-1 in the Open Cup semifinals to advance to the title game.

After Michel scored Orlando's final goal, he celebrated with a backflip.

Sacramento advanced 5-4 on penalties after a scoreless draw with Sporting Kansas City in the semifinals. The Republic also downed the San Jose Earthquakes and the LA Galaxy in Open Cup play.

Sac Republic's appearance in the title match of the tournament, which is more than a century old, is a testament to the team's

perseverance after a tough couple of years.

MLS announced in 2019 that Sacramento would be joining the league this season. But the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the start and the team's lead investor pulled out. The bid was put on hold, and it appears Las Vegas may have leapfrogged Sacramento as the league's next possible franchise.

For the Open Cup, Sacramento coach Mark Briggs is keeping his team grounded.

"I think we'd be false to think that they don't recognize the occasion and they don't recognize the significance of what we're walking into tomorrow," Briggs said on Tuesday. "But it's important that when they have those feelings, when they have those thoughts, we bring them back to the to being present and we bring them back to understanding the detail of which they need to focus on for tomorrow."

Michel has started in 12 games for Orlando in MLS play this season. The Lions are above the playoff line in fifth place in the Eastern Conference standings with six games left in the regular season. □

Vuelta: Roglic falls near finish but gains time on Evenepoel

TOMARES, Spain (AP) — Primož Roglic crashed with the finish line in sight in the Spanish Vuelta on Tuesday but still gained ground on Remco Evenepoel after the overall leader had a puncture a few kilometers from the end.

Neither rider lost time because of their mishaps as they benefitted from a 3-kilometer (1.8-mile) protection zone at the end of the stage.

Roglic was bleeding from his right shoulder, arm and leg as he crossed the line in the 16th stage. The three-time defending champion was going for the victory but went down hard with 75 meters to go while trying

to catch up to the leading breakaway group of four riders.

Mads Pedersen won the stage for his second victory with team Trek-Segafredo in this year's Vuelta. He prevailed over Pascal Ackermann and Danny van Poppe.

"Everyone was really on the limit," Pedersen said. "It's a pity that (Roglic) crashed, he hasn't been lucky this year. I hope he's not too bad, so he can keep contending for the victory."

Roglic, seeking an unprecedented fourth straight Vuelta title with team Jumbo-Visma, had his preparation for the final Grand Tour race of the season

hindered by a crash at the Tour de France.

The Slovenian would have been at least fifth in the stage. He ended finishing 35th but was given the time of the leading group.

Evenepoel also didn't lose time because of his puncture in the final kilometers, losing only eight seconds to Roglic, who now is 1 minute, 26 seconds back entering the decisive final stages. Enric Mas is more than two minutes behind Evenepoel in third place.

"I wanted to move up on the steep bump but my rear wheel just went off," said Evenepoel, the Belgian rider from team Quick-Step Alpha Vinyl. "I'm happy



Mads Pedersen of Denmark and Team Trek, center left, sprints at the finish line as Primož Roglic of Slovenia falls, left back, in the final sprint during the 16th stage of the Vuelta cycling race between San Lucar de Barrameda and Tomares, in Tomares, southern Spain, Tuesday, Sept. 6, 2022. Associated Press

that the 3-kilometer rule exists, otherwise I would have lost a lot of time today."

It is the 11th consecutive stage Evenepoel has held the leader's red jersey, the longest run since Roglic took his first Vuelta win in 2019.

"I expected him to attack," Evenepoel said of Roglic. "We all know that Primož is really explosive so a finale like this is really made for him. That makes it even more a pity that he crashed. You never want anybody to crash." □

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As Serena leaves, Nadal loses, Federer absent, is era over?

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**
AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Serena Williams, you might have heard, played what's expected to be her last match at the U.S. Open. Rafael Nadal lost in the fourth round. Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer (more on them later) weren't even in the tournament.

Those four players dominated, and were the main draws, in tennis for decades, collecting a total of 86 Grand Slam singles titles, each with at least 20. And so, as the quarterfinals began at Flushing Meadows on Tuesday without any member of that quartet present, it made sense to ask: Is this the end of an era? The 36-year-old Nadal sounded a philosophical note about the topic after he was bounced by 24-year-old American Frances Tiafoe 6-4, 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 on Monday. "Some depart, others come and the world keeps going. It's a natural cycle," said Nadal, who noted that his wife is pregnant with their first child and



Serena Williams, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer, right, cheer on the competition during Arthur Ashe Kids' Day, the kick off to the U.S. Open tennis tournament, Aug. 24, 2013, in New York.

Associated Press

so he isn't sure when he will play next. "It's always the same. The same one have been up there several years; others are coming and we will be leaving. It's logical."

Folks have been wondering — and, perhaps, worrying — about when someone

new would emerge to take on the mantle in both women's tennis and men's tennis. This U.S. Open, whether merely symbolic or truly portentous, offers a glimpse at the current and future states of the game. Of the 16 singles quarterfinalists across the women's and

men's brackets, 15 never have won so much as one major championship anywhere (the exception is Iga Swiatek, a 21-year-old from Poland who is No. 1 on the WTA Tour and owns two French Open titles). According to the U.S. Tennis Association, this is the first

time in the professional era, which dates to 1968, that its Grand Slam event featured fewer than at least two past major title winners at this stage.

Looking just at the men's bracket, none of the four quarterfinalists who will play Wednesday — No. 22 seed Tiafoe vs. No. 9 Andrey Rublev, and No. 3 Carlos Alcaraz vs. No. 11 Jannik Sinner — has even reached a major semifinal. Rublev, who turns 25 next month, is the oldest of the bunch.

"It's cool," Tiafoe said, "to see a new era."

And consider: It's been nearly 20 years since there were zero previous Slam champs in the quarterfinals of a major. That last happened at Wimbledon in 2003. Who won the trophy? Federer, claiming the first of his 20, which shattered the old men's mark of 14 established by Pete Sampras, and now has been surpassed by Nadal's 22 and Djokovic's 21 (as well as Williams' 23, the most for any tennis player in the pro era). □



Mexican Andy Ruiz knocks out British Anthony Joshua in a fight for the heavyweight title, on June 1, 2019, in New York.

Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — World heavyweight champion Tyson Fury has parked a potential unification fight with Oleksandr Usyk and

moved his sights toward fellow British heavyweight Anthony Joshua.

In a video published on social media on Tuesday,

Tyson Fury offers Joshua 40% of purse for all-British fight

Fury — the WBC champion — said he was willing to offer Joshua 40% of the purse for a title fight before the end of the year.

"He doesn't have any excuses now not to take it," Fury said. "He can't say I've low-balled him and offered him 20 or 30%. I've offered (his) people 40% — take it or leave it."

The unbeaten Fury appears to have gone back on his decision to retire in the wake of beating another British fighter, Dillian Whyte, in front of around 90,000 spectators at Wem-

bley Stadium in April.

Fury's hopes of landing a fight with Usyk, who retained the WBA, WBO and IBF belts by beating Joshua in Saudi Arabia last month, were dashed when the Ukrainian said he did not intend to fight again this year.

Joshua had intended to work his way back up to being a three-time champion, maybe facing opponents in the second tier of the heavyweight division after losing three of his last five bouts.

Fury's offer might turn his

head, though, and Joshua promoter Eddie Hearn suggested the all-British fight could happen if Fury's offer stood up.

"Personally, I don't believe Fury is serious about this," Hearn told British radio station talkSPORT, "but if he is ... 100% we will sit down and make the fight."

"I would love to get really excited about this, because it's the fight that I get stopped in the street for more than any fight that could be made and it's a fight that AJ has wanted for a long time." □